

Testimony as Prepared for Delivery in support of HB23-1118: Fair Workweek Employment Standards by Sarah Barnes, Director of Family Economic Prosperity Initiatives at the Colorado Children's Campaign

House Business Affairs and Labor Committee

Feb. 16, 2023, 1:30 p.m.

HCR 0112

- Madam Chair and members of the committee, my name is Sarah Barnes and I am the Director of Family Economic Prosperity Initiatives at the Colorado Children's Campaign.
- Thank you for the opportunity to testify today in support of HB-1118. The Children's Campaign supports this bill because ensuring that parents have predictable work schedules that allow them to take care of their families is critical to child well-being and economic prosperity.
- A study from the Harvard Shift Project found that 39% of parents with young children say they are given less than seven days' notice of their next work schedule. This makes it nearly impossible for parents to secure and maintain a consistent source of childcare that allows them to work.
- This unpredictability is stressful for both parents and children. Children's health benefits from maintained routines and relationships to caregivers, including through stable childcare when their parents are working.
- Unpredictable work schedules also make it difficult for families to plan their finances, because of how income can fluctuate. Families rely on every dollar for essentials like clothing, diapers and food.
- Parents must also manage the cost of childcare to be able to work. Research from the Colorado Health Institute shows that over 60% of the minimum wage income of a working parent is needed to pay for childcare. It is critically important for parents in low-wage jobs and those in a single-parent role to be able to plan for what their monthly income will look like.
- Colorado's new universal preschool program will launch this fall. For the program to be successful and accessible for all of Colorado's families, parents need to have adequate notice of their work schedules so that they can select a provider that meets their needs when they apply for UPK.
- Fair and predictable scheduling is an equitable solution that shows our collective commitment to supporting all Colorado families. To ensure all Colorado kids can thrive, we must protect working families.
- We urge your support of HB-1118. Thank you.